

# GERMANS BEATEN BACK IN DESPERATE ATTACKS TO RETAKE FLANDERS POSITION

## LOSING THEIR ARMIES ARE DEADLOCKED AS YEAR CLOSES

### Destruction of German Commerce, Freeing of Serbia and Occupation of Galicia Only Decisive Results.

By J. W. T. MASON  
NEW YORK, Dec. 31.—The end of the year, and with it the conclusion of five months' fighting, finds only three positive results accomplished, which, to a practical certainty, will continue as permanent factors in the campaign. These are the expulsion of German commerce from the seas, the freeing of Serbia and Russia's occupation of Eastern Galicia.

Everything else that has happened in the war zones is tentative. East and West indecision dominates the situation, for while Germany has been beaten in her main objective, Germany's defeat has not been accomplished.

The August predictions that the German Empire was to be disintegrated and the House of Hohenzollern exiled by a European congress after the war have vanished with most of the other early prophecies of the war. A decisive overthrow of Germany is no longer among the probabilities. The end of the year sees Germany being slowly forced back, but the effort is almost superhuman. Berlin's capture would produce more exultation among the Allies than would be the worth of that adventure.

### DISAPPOINTMENT FOR ALL.

Disappointment has dominated all the war's developments, and all the belligerents; it would be but logically in keeping if the ultimate peace were similarly disappointing.

Belgium's participation in the war, with furious patriotism, struck the keynote of indecision, by interposing unexpected obstacles in the path of the German advance on Paris. Liege and the Belgian army held the Germans sufficiently for the English expeditionary corps to arrive, and it was the English who, in turn, checked General von Kluck and saved the French army during the retreat through northern France. The German army was thrown out of its stride by these interludes and Paris was saved.

But there followed immediately an indecisive result for the Allies. The battle of the Marne was fought for the preservation of Paris, and though General Joffre won a victory which will rank among the decisive conflicts of history, the success was not followed up. While the allied nations were exulting at the flight of the Germans, the latter sat at the Alame, on September 12, and have stuck there ever since.

For a month, from mid-September until the middle of October, the Allies sent columns northward, trying to outflank the enemy; but the Germans met every new move with a counter stroke. Finally on October 9 the Germans captured Antwerp and then rushed rapidly across Belgium, occupying Ostend on October 15.

### THIRD STRUGGLE INDECISIVE.

At this stage the Germans tried to regain the general offensive which they had lost at the battle of the Marne. They sought to extend their line from Ostend along the Belgian and French coast to Calais. Then began the third struggle of the western campaign. As a counter-effect the Allies attempted to pierce the German line at Arras, which is the main northern outer gateway to the German communications. Indecision again resulted. After a series of the fiercest conflicts of the war, in which the numerically inferior English army particularly distinguished itself, only a draw resulted. The Allies saved the coast and the Germans saved their communications.

A series of subordinate encounters has been in constant progress along the Franco-German border throughout the year, almost independent of the major conflict further to the west. At the beginning of the campaign the French attempted an offensive of their own in Alsace and Lorraine, but speedily were compelled to abandon both. Nearly four months later they returned to Alsace, and are in possession of the northern districts as the year closes. The German hold in the Meuse area about corresponds with the French grip on southern Alsace.

### HINDENBURG'S GENIUS SHINES.

The Russian campaign has been more unfortunate for the Slavs than has the western fighting for the czar's allies. Primarily this is due to the fact that the one military genius the war has developed is pitted against the Russians. If any one man has saved Germany he is Field Marshal von Hindenburg, who has dominated the strategic and tactical situations in the east almost at will.

Yet, remarkable as has been the ability displayed by the German commander-in-chief, indecision is as dominant in the east as in the west. A different tale could have been told if Austria had proved herself as efficient as Germany. But the Austrians have not shown either the leadership or the individual prowess of their allies. As the Germans have beaten the Russians, so have the Slavs defeated the Austrians.

Most of Galicia has been lost to the Austrians; they have been ignominiously overthrown by little Serbia, and the last day of the year finds them harried amid the Carpathian Mountains trying to prevent the Russians from invading Hungary in force.

### ALLIES RULE SEA.

On the seas there have been numerous destructions of minor craft and an occasional capital ship has been sent to the bottom. But the dominating fact of Great Britain's command of the water has in no way been disturbed. Instances of personal daring of individual luck and ill luck, of isolated and chance disaster have been abundant, but they have played no part in robbing the Allies of the tremendous advantage of their superior sea power.

### DEATH FOR HITTING GERMAN.

COPENHAGEN, Dec. 31.—A private message from Berlin says that the German Supreme War Tribunal has sentenced a British prisoner of war, one Tomblin, to death for assaulting it. It is stated, a German officer at the Döberitz concentration camp.

### CONVICTION IN THE FIRST INSTANCE.

London, in the first instance, was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment, but the military authorities appeal for a sentence of capital punishment has been pronounced. Tomblin, it is admitted, did not know the officer, and the judge said that he was not a spy.

## CZAR'S OFFENSIVE FORCES GERMANS TO REFORM LINES

### Russian Drive With New Vigor and Fresh Troops Compels Evacuation of Dearly Gained Positions.

PETROGRAD, Dec. 31.—The German armies under Field Marshal von Hindenburg and Oberst General von Mackensen have been compelled to take up new positions by the vigor of the Russian attacks west of Warsaw.

In Poland the Russian positions are satisfactory at every point, thanks to the strategy of Grand Duke Nicholas. Field Marshal von Hindenburg has been compelled to abandon his assaults on the roads converging at Warsaw and his forces are now on the defensive.

The position held by the Germans on the right bank of the Bzura a few miles north of Sochaczew has been abandoned by them. Hard fighting is in progress around Bollnow, where the Germans are resisting the advance of the Russians with the courage of despair.

A battle is raging around Gombin, between Lowicz and the Vistula River, where the Germans have thrown forward the flower of their invading army into the fray. The early stages of this engagement have been favorable to the Russians, who captured a whole platoon of quick-firing guns.

The Russians are again driving in the direction of Cracow from a point immediately east of Zakliczyn. First, however, they must force a passage of the Dunajec River at that point. Zakliczyn is only 21 miles southeast of Cracow.

There is a hard fight for trenches south of Inowlodz.

The Russian advance has been steady since Sunday, especially in the sphere of operations south of the Vistula. The ability of Grand Duke Nicholas to place fresh formations upon his battle front to oppose the worn-out German troops has compelled Oberst General von Mackensen and Field Marshal von Hindenburg to change their plan of campaign and to retire to other positions on the Bzura and Rawka Rivers.

The official statement from General Headquarters today shows that heavy fighting continues west of Warsaw against the Germans at Bollnow, near Sochaczew, on the lower Bzura River, at Inowlodz, on the Pilica and at Malogorzki, in the Silesia River. The conflict has been general in these districts for several days.

The evacuation by the Germans of the village of Mistrzewice, five miles north of Cracow, related officially by the War Office, is regarded by military critics here as "ringing down the curtain on the third German advance toward Warsaw."

At a tremendous cost to themselves the Germans had succeeded in establishing a foothold in Mistrzewice, on the east bank of the Bzura River, but their persistent sledge hammer attacks during the last three weeks failed to penetrate the Russian line before Warsaw.

The Germans steadily threw reinforcements into the town in an endeavor to extend their position along the river. When it became evident that the Austrian advance from the Carpathian Mountains had failed, the Germans evacuated the village during intervals between Russian attacks. The Austrian operations from the Carpathians evidently formed an integral part of the general plan of the Germans for the Warsaw campaign.

In Galicia the Russians have taken the important town of Gorlice, 15 miles south of Tuchow, where the Russians recently halted the west Galician army of the Austrians, preventing it from joining with that of General Boehm-Ermoll, which was advancing from Sanok and Liske.

Gorlice is the junction point of several railroads running east, west and south through the Carpathian district. The pursuit of the retreating Austrians in the Sanok-Liske district has been carried as far as Jaslika, on the extreme left flank of the Austrians, which has been captured. Jaslika commands the most important highway into Hungary.

### AUSTRIANS FACE DISASTER IN CARPATHIAN RETREAT

Petrograd Reports Failure of Foe's Flanking Movement.

PETROGRAD, Dec. 31.—The Austrian army, under General Boehm-Ermoll, which was sent to reinforce the Austrians retreating through the Dukla Pass and envelop the left wing of the Russian army in the Carpathian Mountain district, has been broken up and is being annihilated.

Sorties from the besieged Austrian fortress at Przemysl have been repulsed with heavy losses.

General Boehm-Ermoll's Austrian army, which was hurried forward under forced marching to reinforce the Austrian troops around Dukla Pass, is in retreat. It is passing through hilly country, where there are no fortresses to give it shelter.

The ground being yielded enables the Russians to take up positions of great strength, thus menacing still further the German troops under von Mackensen.

Railroads are scarce in the region through which the Austrians are retreating, and the roads are so bad that the infantry can make but painful progress. The Russian cavalry, which is in the vanguard of the pursuers, is cutting down hundreds of stragglers and taking other hundreds prisoners of war.

Austria has drawn all the available troops from the Balkan theatre and no further efforts will be made to invade Serbia, according to an announcement attributed to General Konrad von Hostensdorf, chief of staff.

### TURKS LOSE IN CAUCASIA

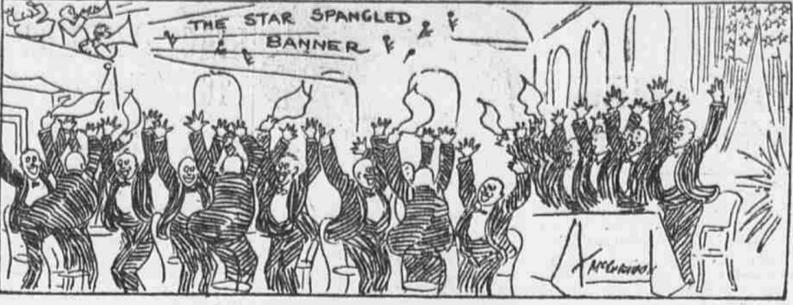
Russians Inflict Heavy Losses by Cossack Assault.

PETROGRAD, Dec. 31.—A strong Turkish column is reported to have been attacked by the Cossack cavalry north of Barykamyeh and forced to retreat after losing half of its strength. The Turkish forces, which were reported concentrating in the vicinity of Yalanzhan Pass, are today said to be advancing in the general direction of Ardahan.

### VIENNA, DEC. 31.—Reports from Constantinople say the Turkish forces in the Caucasus have won signal victories in the southern part of the Vilayet of Erzurum, in which they have captured Russian guns and taken seven officers and 24 men prisoners.

### HARRY LAUDER GIVES \$5000

GLASGOW, Dec. 31.—Harry Lauder, Scotch singer, today contributed \$5000 to the Prince of Wales fund for war relief.



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## AS IT ALWAYS MUST BE

### FRENCH CAPTURE STEINBACH IN FIGHT

Continued from Page One

forces of General Pau was the chief feature of the afternoon official communiqué. It was stated at military headquarters that the Germans were defeated only after hours of the most desperate fighting, in which the French essayed half a dozen bayonet charges. Repulsed, they came back again and again, until they finally gained a foothold on the very outskirts of the village. They then advanced from house to house, using their own machine guns to dislodge the Germans.

The fighting is now confined to the center and right wings of the French lines. From the sea to the Alame the situation was reported quiet today. The snow and rains have made active operations impossible.

The Germans blew up two of the French trenches just north of Sillery last night, but their subsequent attack was repulsed with heavy losses. The French held their own in the face of the Austrian series of bayonet attacks, and the Germans were finally compelled to fall back.

North of Mesnil-lez-Hurlus the French have taken the offensive and have captured a number of the German trenches in that region. To the north of La Ferme d'Beausjour a German counter attack was repulsed, and the Germans were driven back on their own secondary lines. Slight gains are reported in the Argonne region.

### FRENCH CLAIMS OF VICTORY FLATLY DENIED BY BERLIN

Allies Have Gained at No Point on Line, Say Germans.

BERLIN, Dec. 31.—Flat contradiction of the French claims of successes came from the War Office today. It is declared in the official statement that the French attacks north of Chalons have been repulsed with heavy losses, and that at no point along the battle front have there been any gains by the Allies.

According to the statement, the Allies are shelling Westende again, and have succeeded in destroying many of the houses and public buildings. The fire, however, has not caused any military losses, according to the War Office.

An entire French company is reported to have been annihilated when German sappers succeeded in blowing up a line of trenches between Alger and Auberge to the south of Rheims. The French attacks north of Chalons have been repulsed, it is declared. In the western Argonne region it is stated that several of the French trenches have been taken with 350 prisoners.

A French attack on Flirey, north of Toul, has failed, while all attacks on the German positions at Senhain have broken down.

### Britain's Greeting to United States

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Poem by Dr. Robert Bridges, Poet Laureate, entitled "New Year's Greeting to the United States of America."

Ask ye what word of cheer Hath England's muse to send The one of this New Year To Britain's free-born folk?

Vain words are vain to spend— We shout the battlecry: Her dearest children die For all that we hold dear— Yet thus the mother spoke.

Oceans that seemed once wide When first ye crossed its flood, It threatened to divide Even the bond of blood; See how it shrunken hath Unto a pleasure path; While o'er and underneath The light words of my breath Flash kindly to your heart.

Oh, well ye hear! ye see! And our hopes are as one— For peace and liberty Of all men 'neath the sun. For the grace of man's art And the love of our own kind. So, this year's wishes be Hand in hand, mind with mind, That we stand, till we quell, And in straight limits bind War's rage, the storm of hell.

### AUSTRIANS HALT RUSSIANS AT CARPATHIAN PASSES

Attempted Surprise Attack Defeated With Heavy Loss to Invaders.

VIENNA, Dec. 31.

The War Office in its review of the situation today declares efforts of the Russians to force the Carpathian passes have been repulsed. The danger of an attempted invasion of Hungary is said to be remote, inasmuch as strong forces now dominate every inlet through mountains. The Russians, it stated, attempted a surprise attack at Usok Pass, but were in turn surprised and defeated with heavy loss. Austrian artillery has been posted where it commands all of the approaches from the north, and the majority of the heights in that vicinity are also said to be dominated by crack Hungarian divisions.

Spanish Army Airman Killed  
MADRID, Dec. 31.—Captain Castell, a Spanish army aviator, while flying in a biplane over the aerodrome here yesterday fell from a height of 300 feet and was killed.

TRUSSES ELASTIC STOCKINGS ABDOMINAL SUPPORTERS, ETC. LATEST PATENT PURCHASE FLAVELL'S 1011 SPRING GARDEN ST.

## GERMANS ACCUSED IN OFFICIAL REPORT OF TORTURING FOES

### Breaches of International Law Alleged in Seventh Statement Issued by Belgian Commission.

LONDON, Dec. 31.—The Belgian commission, which has been investigating alleged breaches of international law by German soldiers, issued its seventh report through the Press Bureau today, making the following accusations:

"Upon numerous instances soldiers of the Allied army have been treated for wounds caused by expanding bullets.

"French soldiers who were wounded in the fighting on August 16 were found the next day with their skulls battered with rifle bullets.

"Eighteen dead Belgian riflemen were found in the woods near Malines, having been killed by bayonet thrusts in the face.

"On August 23 German soldiers fired upon a Red Cross ambulance near Namur, wounding two doctors.

"On August 25 near Sempt two Belgian corpses were found hanging on trees, with bayonet wounds in the stomach. Several other bodies were found, with their hands tied behind them. Some of the dead had been tortured, their heads having been twisted until the faces pointed toward the rear. Fingers had been pulled from the sockets."

The report further charges that English prisoners of war are badly treated on their journey into Germany. Instances are mentioned where Germans compelled captive women and civilian prisoners to stand before the German troops to prevent the enemy from firing.

The Germans are also accused of having killed 400 persons near Namur, in western Belgium, by firing upon a column of 600 persons.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 31.—The Belgian Minister has filed with the State Department a protest against the requisitioning by German military authorities in Belgium of merchandise worth about \$1,400,000. He asserted that the policy of the Germans meant the ruin of industry in Belgium.

The protest set forth that the goods were not taken for the use of the German army, and that consequently the seizure was in violation of the Fourth Hague Convention.

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## AERIAL SQUADRONS OF ALLIES ACTIVE IN ATTACKING FOES

### Successful Raids Over German Soil Recounted in Official Report—General Gains Claimed.

PARIS, Dec. 31.—The great activity of the French aviators is especially mentioned in an official report covering the operations on the battlefield between December 16 and 24, which says:

"In spite of the extreme difficulty resulting from rain, wind and fog, our squadrons of aeroplanes and our dirigibles have done excellent work. One of the latter on the night of the 17th dropped 15 bombs upon the railroad station of Sarreburg, six upon that of Petit Eich, five shells and a thousand arrows upon a train in the railroad station of Heilming. The damage done was important and was acknowledged by German newspapers.

"On several occasions, the 15th, 20th, some German machines were obliged to descend. On the 18th one of our aviators shot and killed a German pilot, whose machine crashed to earth. On another occasion near Arras an aviator was put to flight by 20 machine shots.

"In spite of the state of the atmosphere, some of our aviators on the 18th successfully dropped bombs and arrows upon the enemy's trenches; upon a concentration of troops on the 18th and 20th; upon railroad stations and trains the 20th and 22d; upon a captive balloon the 21st; upon the port of Strassburg on the Rhine and the railroad depot of Lisseuse the 22d."

The report makes claims of general gains by the Allies. "This period of five days," it says, "resulted in consolidating the successes won by us during the 30 days preceding. Our aggressive attitude has been continued with even increased energy; everywhere the enemy has been reduced to a defensive attitude. The violence of counter attacks has been evidence that he accepted this attitude reluctantly. The checking of every movement made by him in his endeavor to recapture the ground lost to us made our advantage the greater."

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